Healthy Calcium Choices

Objective:

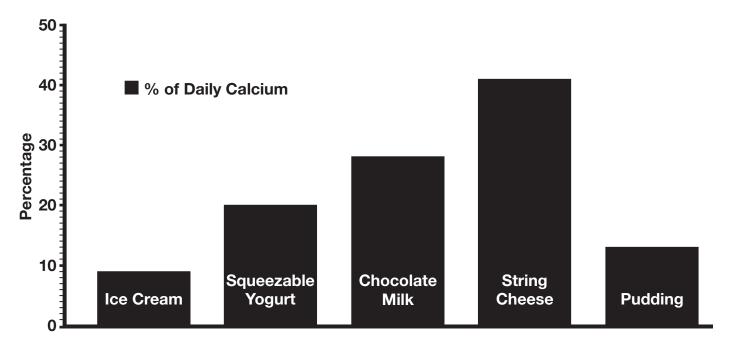
 Students will compare foods rich in calcium to those with lower amounts of calcium or no calcium.

Materials Needed:

- Pencil one per student
- Paper one per student
- Calcium Content of Foods worksheet-one per student (included in this lesson)

Lesson Introduction:

- Discuss the importance of consuming calciumrich foods for bone health, especially at their current age and throughout their life. Explain that calcium is needed daily to:
 - combine with vitamin D and physical activity to build and maintain strong bones.
 - build bone mass, which is developing rapidly between the ages of 10 and 20.
 - build strong bones to prevent osteoporosis.
 Also explain that calcium is stored in the body and 99% of that calcium is stored in the bones and can be found in dairy products such as milk, yogurt and cheese.
- 2. Ask students to write down foods they have eaten today that contain calcium. Are they getting enough? (at least three cup equivalents of milk a day, 1 cup of milk, 8 oz. of yogurt, or 1½ cups of hard cheese) Remind students that an easy way to get three servings is to make milk the beverage of choice for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Encourage students to select low-fat (1%) or fat-free.



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Funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), an equal opportunity provider and employer, in collaboration with the lowa Department of Public Health and Midwest Dairy Council. Iowa's Food Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. Go to www.yesfood.iowa.gov for more information.

Activity:

- Explain the importance of choosing nutrientrich calcium products. Have students focus on the calcium content for the activity.
- 2. Distribute the Calcium Content of Foods worksheet to the students.
- 3. Have students pick five of the foods listed on the worksheet they enjoy eating. Have them create a graph with the calcium content on the vertical plane and the food selection on the horizontal plane. See example below:

Ask students to identify which foods are better for bone health. Which foods have the most calcium per serving? (Answer: milk or dairy products such as yogurt and cheese)

Have students share what their favorite high-calcium dairy product is with the rest of the class.



Activity Extension:

Language Arts: Have students keep a daily food diary for one week listing the food they eat. At the end of the week, poll the students about how many days they had the three cups of milk or milk equivalent every day. Ask the students who had three diary products each day to share how they accomplished it and in what meals included milk or diary products. Ask the students who did not get three dairy products each day to brainstorm ways they could incorporate more dairy into their diets (drink milk during school lunch, eat breakfast at school and drink milk with breakfast, ask parents to melt low-fat cheese over vegetables, drink milk for a snack after school). If children don't or can't consume milk, they should choose lactosefree products or other calcium sources such as fortified foods and beverages.

Cafeteria Connection: Have students vote on their favorite calcium-rich diary product. Coordinate a class party including a variety of those dairy products for students to taste and enjoy or work with the school nutrition director to make it a part of the school menu.

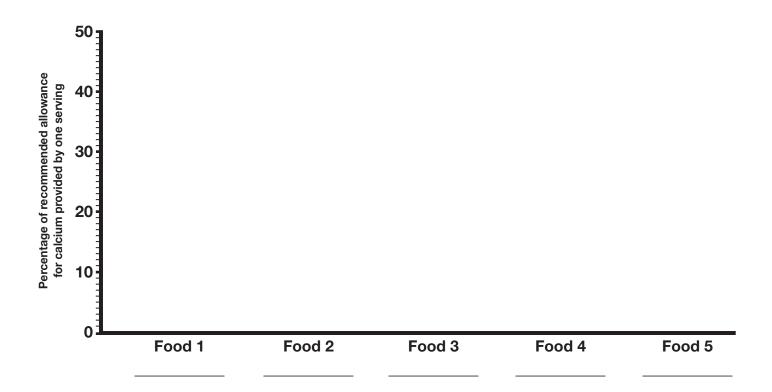
Calcium Content of Foods

½ cup ice cream 9%
1 oz. cream cheese 2%
1 cup 1% cottage cheese 6%
1 oz. cheddar cheese 31%
12 oz. yogurt smoothie 22%
1 cup low-fat yogurt 31%
1 cup of strawberry milk 28%

4 oz. squeezable yogurt 20% ½ cup pudding 13% 1 cup skim milk 28% 1 cup chocolate milk 28% 1 cup drinkable yogurt 32% 12 oz. sport drink 0%

1 ½ oz. American cheese 26%
1 cup fruit punch 0%
2 oz. string cheese 41%
12 oz. soft drink 0%
1 ½ oz. Swiss cheese 41%
½ cup frozen yogurt 10%

1. Select your favorite five foods in this list and graph the percentages of calcium each food provides.



2. What foods would you eat in one day to reach 100 percent? List each food and add up the percentages for a total for the day.